

# Resolution

No. 26-39

## APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT OF MARGARET T. WILLIS AS DIRECTOR OF HUMAN CONCERNS

WHEREAS, by correspondence dated January 30, 2026, Mayor Richard T. Bissen, Jr. notified the Council of his appointment of Margaret T. Willis as Director of Human Concerns effective March 1, 2026; and

WHEREAS, Section 8-10.2 of the Revised Charter of the County of Maui (1983), as amended, states: "The director of human concerns is appointed by the mayor with the approval of the council and may be removed by the mayor."; and

WHEREAS, Charter Section 6-2.5 provides that the Council must confirm or deny the appointment within 60 days after receiving notice of the Mayor's appointment; and

WHEREAS, Section 78-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, states in part:

(b) All appointive officers in the service of the government of the State or any county who are employed as department heads and deputies or assistants to a department head shall be citizens of the United States and residents of the State for at least one year immediately preceding their appointment; provided the foregoing one year residency requirement may be waived by the appointing authority when the appointive officer is:

(1) Required to have highly specialized or scientific knowledge and training and a qualified applicant who is a resident for at least one year is not available to fill the position; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Willis, who does not meet HRS Section 78-1's residency requirement, does possess the highly specialized knowledge and training in the area of unsheltered communities that is required to carry out the duties of the Director of the Human Concerns; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor, as the appointing authority, has waived the residency requirement, as no applicant who is a resident for at least one year possesses the highly specialized knowledge and training in unsheltered communities that is needed and required to address the challenges the County faces; and

WHEREAS, caring for and assisting Maui County's unsheltered community has been identified by the Administration as the top issue for the next Director of Human Concerns to address in the upcoming years; and

WHEREAS, the topic of homelessness is a unique, timely, and pressing issue facing Maui County and its residents; and

WHEREAS, according to the County of Maui's 2024 Quality of Life Survey, respondents ranked "Homelessness" in the top 10 of "Worst Thing(s) About Life on Island"; and

WHEREAS, survey respondents identified "Cost of Living" and "Social and Population Issues" as the two top broader themes in "Worst Thing(s) About Life on Island"; and

WHEREAS, also, according to a 2024 *Honolulu Civil Beat* survey, "homeless issues" were identified in the top five of most pressing issues Maui is facing; and

WHEREAS, responding to and caring for the County's unsheltered community requires highly specialized knowledge and training; and

WHEREAS, Charter Section 8-10.3, "Powers, Duties, and Functions," states:

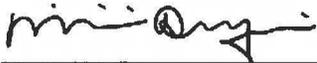
The director of human concerns shall:

1. Develop a comprehensive approach to the effective administration and coordination of programs and plans of action designed to meet human needs in the County.
2. Strive to effectively address the health, safety, and basic social needs of all segments of the County community and to enhance the quality of life of all residents.
3. Implement programs and services for senior citizens, youth, the economically challenged, and homeless.
4. Develop, supervise, and coordinate such programs and projects assigned by the mayor.
5. Perform other duties and functions as assigned by the mayor or as prescribed by ordinance; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it approves the appointment of Margaret T. Willis as the Director of Human Concerns effective March 1, 2026, under Charter Section 8-10.2; and
2. That certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor and Managing Director.

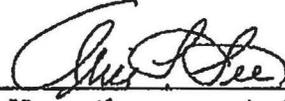
APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:



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MIMI DESJARDINS  
First Deputy Corporation Counsel  
County of Maui  
LF2025-2234  
2026-01-12 Reso Appointing Human Concerns Director

INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chris Lee", written over a horizontal line.

Upon the request of the Mayor.